

**AB 75 Principal Training Advisory Group Meeting
November 15, 2001**

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Introduction and purpose of meeting

Chair Dave Gordon asked attending members to introduce themselves once again. He explained that the primary purpose of this meeting is to gather public input on the AB 75 principal training provider criteria.

State Board Update

State Board member Suzanne Tacheny, liaison to the AB 75 Advisory Group, gave brief remarks. She thanked the Advisory Group on behalf of the State Board and commended them for their quick and focused work. She explained that the State Board previously approved three guiding principles for the AB 75 work: provider proposals will have to meet a minimum standard in each content area; training will have to include assessments; and district applications will assure that the law is met and will be subject to audit. Tacheny also described a Board-approved contract with the Sacramento County Office of Education to develop provider criteria for AB 466, legislation introducing the Math and Reading Professional Development Program. She noted that the contractor will assist the Board in linking the training criteria for AB 466 and AB 75 to ensure consistency between the two programs.

Gates Foundation update

Advisory Group member Jay Schenirer announced that the Gates Foundation Grant has been formalized. The grant will provide \$18 million over 3 years, and will fund district matches for 9000 principals over 3 years. With this amount, the grant is intended to reach both current principals and new principals who join the workforce in the next 3 years. The grant may also provide funds for private school principals. In addition, there is \$1 million available for districts to match funds for vice principal training. Schenirer reminded the group that the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) will be fiscal agent for the grant.

Public comment

Chairperson Dave Gordon invited speakers to address the Advisory Group one-by-one at this time.

Speaker: Gary Quiring, Consultant, Education Technology Office, California Department of Education.

Quiring described an online teacher technology tool called the California Technology Assessment Profile (CTAP). He recommended that the Advisory Group consider incorporating this site into the required components of the AB 75 training. He explained how principals could use the CTAP to assess the technology expertise of their staff and develop professional development projects for their school. He explained that CTAP is aligned with CTC's technology requirements, and that a number of enhancements are being made to CTAP to allow for more sophisticated comparisons of different groups and

of pre- and post-assessments. These new components will be available by the end of the year. When asked about an administrator proficiency tool, Quiring responded that they are planning to develop one in the future pending administrative approvals. Quiring was asked about having a possibly redundant technology assessment that is not coordinated with the survey that is required by the Gates grant. Quiring responded that the advantage of having a California-specific assessment is ownership of the data. An Advisory Group member made a distinction between the requirement that training participants have knowledge of CTAP and the requirement that it be a part of the training.

Speaker: Kathleen Cohn, Associate Dean, CSU Long Beach.

Cohn urged the Advisory Group to allow for flexibility and collaboration between K-12 institutes and institutes of higher education. She said there are already many examples of collaboration on teacher and administrator preparation in communities throughout the state. She described efforts to work with ACSA in addressing the AB 75 domains and the Tier 2 requirements. She urged the Advisory Group to require individual assessment, as well as evaluation of programs. She said that providers should be able to deliver across all the domains by building in true collaboration, and not offer a “patchwork” of services. Cohn said she is much in favor of agreed-upon standards being the framework for training programs so that all teachers and administrators are well versed in what teachers and administrators should be able to do. Last, the training should target student achievement. When asked to describe existing collaboratives, Cohn talked about the strong relationship with K-12 around Tier 1 into Tier 2 training. She emphasized that in these relationships each agency brings their different strengths to the table. When asked about the need for differentiation, Cohn talked about the use of standards and the need for assessment to determine what is needed locally. Advisory Group members asked Cohn several additional questions. In her responses, she discussed the use of faculty and retired administrators as coaches and the need to have well-tested processes to assess skill sets.

Speaker: David Patterson, CANEC.

Patterson spoke about the need to recognize that there are specialized populations with different needs, challenges and opportunities, and that the principal training should reflect this. In particular, he spoke of the need for diverse providers that can serve charter schools. Patterson emphasized the importance of focusing on student achievement and using data. He raised the question of whether all providers will use the same assessment instrument and urged the Advisory Group to allow specialized assessments. Last, he urged the group to “keep it simple.” When asked, Patterson said there are approximately 300 charter school administrators and that they are difficult to characterize as a group. In response to another question, Patterson stated that in particular, the areas of finances and personnel are different in charter schools, and will require specialized training opportunities for principals.

Speaker: Jennifer Jeffries, CSU San Marcos.

Jeffries told the group that she believes higher education can make an important contribution to administrator training. She described how institutes of higher education can help cut down on redundancy. She stated that county offices of education and institutes of higher education should be encouraged to participate in principal training,

and that many regions already have good ongoing collaborations. She described the importance of helping administrators stay current, and grounding the training in good research. Advisory Group members expressed concerns about follow-through from universities and university experience with inner-city schools. The need for universities to form strong relationships with other agencies as part of a collaborative was discussed. It was suggested that the group consider model collaborative programs in their deliberations.

Speaker: Karen Kearney, California School Leadership Academy (CSLA) at WestEd and County Offices of Education.

Kearney described CSLA as an example of collaboration between agencies, including WestEd, county offices, colleges, and universities, and she stated that CSLA uses California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSELs). She noted that inside the CPSELs is a “continuum of practice” model that describes the needs of novice to experienced educational leaders and stated that this would be helpful to look at when thinking about differentiation of the principal training. She said that there is a planning group working on another document to follow CPSELs that describes best practices, similar to the content of the standards for the teaching profession. In addition, they are working on a progressive assessment for administrators who are building their competencies. Kearney emphasized that coaching is a key component, but that there are not enough people out there to be coaches. She described a successful coaching network model. She stated that the quality of criteria for vendors will be the key, and that vendors should have successful leadership training experience, including working with standards. Vendors should propose how to control the quality. It is important that the vendors can put together teams with experience in low-performing schools. Vendors should know about change and continuous improvement models, and have knowledge of Title I, AB 961 and AB75. Vendors need to incorporate research and best practices, should know adult learning theory, and have capacity to use technology well. They should understand standards, and participate in administrator preparation. It is also important for vendors to show some experience for managing a project at every level they propose. Vendors need to prepare the facilitators they choose. Facilitators should work in teams of at least two to address variation, and must be excellent teachers. In response to a question about evaluation of professional development, Kearney replied that they use external evaluations and participant response at the program level. They also do portfolio evaluations, and look at indicators such as “who shows up” and “who comes back.” In response to a question about successful coaching models, Kearney responded that “follow through support” could happen at different levels, depending on individual needs. There could be a variety of coaching activities, from self-coaching and peer coaching, to “networks” of administrators, to one-on-one coaching for those who need the most support.

Advisory Group members discussed how coaches’ characteristics should match what they are coaching, but that perhaps not all coaches need to have site-level experience. They could have administrative experience elsewhere, such as someone from business to provide coaching in finance. Coaches with different skills could step in at different points, as needed by the administrator.

In response to a question about whether to encourage districts to send all their principals at one time, Kearney responded that she has experience in both models. If a full team can train together, there is a better chance of systemic change. However, there is also a need for discussion across districts, so a combination of both approaches is ideal.

In response to a comment and question about portfolios as a means of assessment, Kearney replied that what is important is what is done with a portfolio, not the portfolio itself. The person providing the guidance is important to help the person test their thinking, analyze, rethink, demonstrate progress, and test ideas against the real work.

An advisory group member described AB 75 as giving “the buyers money to spend on their administrators,” yet said that “it’s not just about buying service. This is a shared investment [between LEA and provider]. It was emphasized that AB 75 must be tremendously flexible, and that the AB 75 training should not be identical to what has been done before. Kearney responded about the importance of training modules that are not static, and stressed that with a lot of variation, the buyers will have a choice. It was added that districts will need to be good buyers and match the training to the needs of their schools and kids.

Finally, Kearney noted that we should try to construct a principal training system that is congruent with teacher professional development, and again stressed the importance of building collegiality.

Speaker: Gary Bloom, New Teacher Center at UC Santa Cruz.

Bloom described a program of induction for principals that consists of a series of seminars and intensive one-on-one coaching. He emphasized the need for differentiation around the needs of participants, and the need for coordination with Tier 2 requirements. He described BTSA as a great model for induction, noting that new principals typically get half the support that new teachers receive. He stressed that principals face very different challenges depending on their school context, and that there must be flexibility of content in the training. Bloom described the success of the full-time support provider model, which includes using retirees as support providers. He described the stress of public scrutiny for principals and the need for intense induction support for beginning administrators. He expressed concern about the quality of individualized support given the funding available. He suggested finding a way to move more funding toward the novices. Bloom stressed the importance of coaches receiving training. He also expressed concern about proposals that involve technology. For example, online mentoring will not be helpful because principals working 10-hour days are not inclined to get on line. He suggested it would be helpful to play out some scenarios of what a satisfactory program might look like. When asked for clarification, Bloom said there may be a place for online follow-up, but that an online chat room cannot adequately serve as a coach. He stated his belief that meeting with principals at the school site and following it up with individual coaching is the most effective model.

At this point, Assemblyman Daryl Steinberg, author of AB 75, addressed the Advisory Group, thanking them for their work. He explained that AB 75 started from a discussion

of “how do we attract quality teachers?” Teachers need quality principals, he explained, and therefore we need to support administrators. He stated that 80 hours of initial support is a very important step, and that customizing the program for districts is very important.

Before proceeding with additional public comment, speakers were reminded that the charge of the Advisory Group is very specific and narrow: to deliberate on criteria for the state board to use in approving vendors. We cannot expand or mandate anything, it was explained, and we must remain within our scope. Speakers were asked to make their comments with this in mind.

Speaker: Linda Wisher, ACSA.

Using the Advisory Group’s questions as a guide, Wisher made the following comments: She stated that not all principals will come with the same skills and experiences. The training must be designed around the individual context. She encouraged the group to integrate the technology piece in other areas. She stated that the items in 6b are critical. She stated that there should be differentiation based on the administrator continuum [in the CPSELs]. She proposed having differentiated delivery models that incorporate participants’ perspectives. She stated that coaching is critical. She stated that vendors should be responsible for providing comprehensive training packages. She stressed that the evaluation piece is imperative for quality control through the vendor, and that feedback on both content and delivery are needed. Participants should do reflections after they’ve tried out the practice. She stated that the State Board should approve vendors based on the content they offer and the evaluation component they propose. She suggested that proposals should be rated by asking for specific requirements, and should not be approved if they do not meet them. Finally, she said that continuous growth, flexibility, a variety of services available, and research and best practices must be embedded in the training.

At this point the Advisory Group briefly discussed how to dovetail the training to avoid redundancies with Tier 1 and Tier 2. Linda Bond offered to provide data on how many principals are interns.

Speaker: Brett McFadden, ACSA.

The speaker noted the difficulty of the Advisory Group’s task. He encouraged the group to “stick to the basic parts of the bill.” He cautioned that the group is being approached by many different interests, and that not all of them can be addressed in the time available. He encouraged the group to look at a broader framework, to be flexible, to consider Tier 2, and to be “user friendly.” He asked the group to think about what principals and teachers face daily.

Speaker: Jean Brown, LAUSD, Director, Administrator Academy.

The speaker briefly described LAUSD’s Administrator Academy, a program for entry-level administrators that includes a coaching component. Using the Advisory Group’s questions as a guide, Brown made the following comments: There needs to be flexibility. Programs should be required to address all topics, but the hours should be left flexible. Districts need latitude in how they deliver the training, keeping in mind that some

administrators have very limited experience. All vendors should be considered and be able to bring in other expertise if needed to cover all areas of training. You need to screen trainers and have information from them. Vendors should have experience working with the California content standards. The training must be relevant. Make sure that the coaches have training so that they can facilitate changing behaviors to help administrators examine their practice rather than telling them what to do.

Members of the Advisory Group briefly discussed whether vendors must apply for the entire training package. It was reiterated that the group preferred that vendors put together a total package, partnering if necessary.

Speaker: Suzanne Fisher, Director, California Association of School Psychologists.
The speaker described the challenge to administrators of managing school psychologists without understanding their jobs. She noted that there are 3700 school psychologists statewide, and that many move from school to school. She stated that principals typically don't understand the role of the psychologist. The speaker encouraged the group to include training on the role of school psychologists.

Speaker: Cirenio Rodriguez, CSU Sacramento and Woodland Unified School District School Board.
The speaker expressed his belief that school administrators have a responsibility to develop themselves professionally. He encouraged the group to be flexible in designing criteria. He stated that some of the content should be part of the regular credential program, and that the 80 hours of training is equivalent to 6 units. He asked that principals not be made to repeat the same material, and emphasized that the training must be focused on closing the achievement gap.

Next Steps

The meeting concluded with Advisory Group members offering to review and/or help develop a draft of the criteria before the next meeting on December 10. At the next meeting, the group will look at a draft of the criteria and amend it. A fourth meeting may or may not be needed to conclude the work of the Advisory Group.